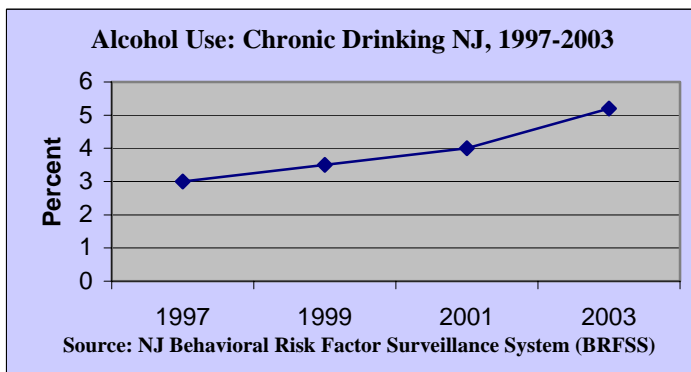




HEALTH DATA FACT SHEET 2004

Alcohol Awareness

- Alcoholism is a chronic disease. It is characterized by a tendency to drink more than was intended, unsuccessful attempts at stopping drinking, and continued drinking despite negative social and occupational consequences.
- Chronic drinking can increase the risk of certain cancers including liver, esophagus, throat and larynx. It can also cause liver cirrhosis, immune system problems, brain damage, and harm to the fetus during pregnancy.
- Drinking increases the risk of death from automobile crashes as well as recreational and on-the-job injuries. Alcohol consumption is also known to increase the risk of committing both homicide and suicide.
- Moderate alcohol use is up to two drinks per day for men and one drink per day for women and older people. But many people drink beyond the moderate level; it is estimated that 14 million Americans, 1 in every 13 adults, abuse alcohol or are alcoholics.



- In 2003, approximately 5% of New Jersey adults described themselves as chronic drinkers, meaning that they consume on average more than two drinks per day for men and more than one drink for women. This marks an increase from the 3.5% who reported chronic drinking in 1999. Chronic drinking increased among males and females, 3.9% to 5.9% and 3.2% to 4.6% respectively, between 1999 and 2003.

- In New Jersey, men are twice as likely to report drinking any alcoholic beverages at least 21 days or more during the past month (14.3%) as compared to women (7.7%).
- New Jersey males are also far more likely to report binge drinking, defined as having 4 to 5 drinks in one sitting, than are females. On average about 12% of men report binge drinking, compared to only about 3% of women.
- The rate of death from chronic liver disease and cirrhosis has declined in New Jersey over the last few years, yet these diseases were the cause of more than 750 deaths in 2001.
- In a third of alcohol-related crashes resulting in fatalities in New Jersey in 2002, the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) was greater than or equal to 0.08. The BAC threshold used to legally define drunk driving was lowered in 2004 from 0.10 to 0.08 percent.
- In New Jersey, young adults are most likely to engage in binge drinking. 22% of adults age 18-25 reported drinking five or more drinks (binge drinking) on days they consume alcohol.

- Among New Jersey adults who report having at least one alcoholic drink in their lifetime, 4% reported having been on alcohol binges where they drank for a couple of days or more without sobering up, and 1% reported having been hospitalized for an alcohol related condition. In addition, 3% reported that they had or have a drinking problem or an addiction to alcohol.
- Half of all lifetime alcohol users, defined as someone who has at least one alcoholic drink during their lifetime, had their first drink when they were less than 18 years of age. Of these, 34% started when they were 15 to 17, 11% when they were 12 to 14 and 5% when they were 11 or younger.
- According to the latest substance dependence treatment needs assessment survey of households in New Jersey, approximately 9 % of New Jersey adults were diagnosed to have a need for treatment of alcohol problems sometime during their lifetime.
- There are different types of treatment for alcoholism depending on the severity. Treatment may include detoxification, medications, and individual and/or group counseling or some combination of the three types.
- For information on alcohol treatment referrals and crisis counseling, New Jersey's Division of Addiction Services offers the following Hotline: 1 800 238-2333. A directory of programs available for addiction services is available at http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/das/getting_help.htm

For more data from the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services visit: <http://www.state.nj.us/health>

For more information on Alcohol Awareness Month visit: www.ncadd.org

Sources:

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services:

[Center for Health Statistics](#)

New Jersey Behavioral Risk Factor Survey
Unpublished mortality data

New Jersey Department of Human Services:

Division of Addiction Services

[The 1998 Substance Dependence Treatment Needs Assessment Survey of Households in New Jersey](#)

National Center for Health Statistics: [Compressed Mortality File](#)

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and alcoholism:

[Alcoholism-Getting the Facts](#)

[State of the Science Report on the Effects of Moderate Drinking](#)

Nation Highway Traffic Safety Administration: [New Jersey, Toll of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2002](#)



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